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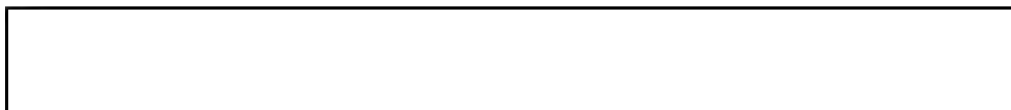
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WESTERN EUROPE: EC enlargement worries European
Communists. (Page 6)



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WESTERN EUROPE: In anticipation of the enlargement of the European Communities (EC), the Communist parties of the member states are moving to develop closer ties.

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[redacted] the French and Italian Communist parties--by far the most powerful in the EC--will soon call for institutionalized cooperation among the ten parties by establishing liaison offices in each country.

[redacted] the Belgians, supported by the Italian party, are also planning to convoke a conference of the ten parties to deal with at least the implications of EC enlargement for labor.

Both initiatives reflect the growing concern with which the Communists view the EC's further development. Although the Italian party has long advocated an active policy of dealing with the EC, including participating in its institutions, the French party has consistently opposed any type of accommodation. There have been recent signs, however, that the position of the French Communists is changing. As staunch followers of the Soviet line, they praised Brezhnev's speech in March which included a softening of Soviet policy toward the EC. Moreover, in reaching an accord on a common program for governing with the French Socialists, the Communists accepted the Socialist position that France should remain an EC member.

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